

## Francis Preston Blair to Andrew Jackson, August 18, 1834, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

### FRANCIS P. BLAIR TO JACKSON.

Washington, August 18, 1834.

. . . . I have just left Barry and Lewis at the White House. I had gone up to visit Mrs. Cass with Lewis, after persuading Eliza in vain to go with us. She said she was too unwell, and we had not been sitting with Mrs. Cass more than 15. minutes, when just as we were starting back, we met Eliza walking as active as Emily on the Race Course, and smirking with your letter in her hand, which she had just got from the Post office. She had travelled a half a mile to spread the good news, which your hand writing on the back indicated. We came back together to your house, read over the letter, drank your health in glasses of Ice Sangree, notwithstanding the Cholera, and with one accord wished that you might not come back again to take possession of our “ *high life above stairs* ” until the ice formed as thick in Van Nesses' ditch as it was in our Sangree, which might be a quarter of an inch.

The Postmaster General<sup>1</sup> has been quite sick, but is getting to be himself again. He says he will have the facts prepared for your communication and as in the course of the Session, they will also be authenticated by the committee of the House, it will bring the abuses home to the great author of abuses in our day, the Bank. Rives<sup>2</sup> made a calculation for me, showing that largely upwards of an hundred thousand dollars have been filched from the Department in the fraud of giving the Bank the benefit of franking privilege for upwards of a million of speeches it published to destroy you, and this, together with what Duff Green and Gales got for printing them and the Congressional pensions given them, would have paid off the Post office Debt and continued the advantage of

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the mail to many thousands to whom it must now be denied, to satisfy the economical scruples of the Bankites. I am glad of your suggestion of putting off the decision of the Governorship, until you see the whole ground. For my part, I had rather see Eaton gratified, than any of the others named, but I doubt whether the Senate would pass him *again*, and I doubt whether it would be his interest to be passed, for Michigan will be a state, in a year or so, and Florida will not. Besides the Northern or middle section people who have populated Michigan, may feel, that they ought to have a man of their own region, to rule over them.

1 William T. Barry, Postmaster General until 1835, died Aug. 30 of that year.

2 John C. Rives, Blair's partner in the ownership of the *Globe*.

A still more important appointment has devolved on you by the death of Judge Johnson. The aristocracy made a formidable lodgment in the *Judicial life Department*, in Washingtons and Adams' time. Thus Mr. Jefferson could not reach it although he did the midnight batch of Judges. You might have completely reformed it and put an end to the power which rivetted the chains of the Bank on the states, if you had found men of your own principles in Baldwin and McLean. Johnsons death, and the probable resignation of Duval and the Chief Justice before the end of your term, will probably enable you, to impose a strong Republican control over this bench of Lords, especially if you have the making of a Chief Justice, who is something like a president of a Bank, all in all sufficient and prevailing in their privy councils. Crawford and Cummins and King<sup>3</sup> have been talked of here. I think none of them will do. the two last are Bank men. Crawford, although he has got right on that subject, is too old, drinks, sleeps on the bench, is shattered in his faculties. For my part I know but few of the Georgians and those I do know are not much suited to the high calling. Forsythe<sup>4</sup> could recommend well, but thrown

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3 William H. Crawford, formerly Secretary of the Treasury, now a judge in Georgia, died Sept. 15, 1834; Col. William Cumming, a leader of the Union party in Georgia; John P. King, senator from Georgia 1833–1837, previously a judge.

4 John Forsyth of Georgia, Secretary of State since July 1.

in the great issue to which parties are brought at last, he is on the Bank side of the *constitutional principle*, which I take to be altogether the wrong side for a Judge. I think it would be well to have Govr Lumpkins's history of nominees, if you do not know them yourself.

5 Wilson Lumpkin, governor of Georgia 1831–1835.

yr friend

P.S. . . . .